

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended): A device for preventing spray from emerging from a wheel the wheels of a vehicle, the device vehicles comprising a generally planar panel that is adapted to be mounted substantially vertically behind a vehicle wheel for receiving on a first side water released by the wheel as it rotates, the panel including at least one passage which leads from the first side to a rear second side of the panel, the at least one or-each passage being other than normal to the plane of the panel, and at least one water-collecting pocket along a the-side of the at least one or-each passage, wherein, in use, air and water entering the at least one or-each passage are separated so that air passes through the at least one or-each passage and mixes with ambient air on a second side of the panel, and water collects in the at least one or-each water-collecting pocket.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The device as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the panel is formed from a plurality of vertical baffles positioned in a side by side relationship with passages therebetween.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The device as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the plurality of vertical baffles are substantially identical in shape.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The device as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the plurality of vertical baffles overlap one another.

Claim 5 (cancelled)

Claim 6 (currently amended): The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one or each passage is non-linear.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the water-collecting pockets are arranged so as to collect water following a change of direction in the at least one or each passage.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The device as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the at least one ~~or each~~ passage has two changes of direction.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The device as claimed in claim 2[[1]], wherein the at least one ~~or each~~ pocket is a channel running substantially vertically along a ~~its~~-respective baffle, so that, in use, water drains from the baffles onto a surface on which the wheel is travelling.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The device as claimed in Claim 9, wherein the channel is substantially U-shaped.

Claim 11 (canceled)

Claim 12 (previously presented): The device as claimed in Claim 3, wherein the baffles overlap one another.

Claim 13 (new): A device for preventing spray from emerging from a wheel of a vehicle, the device comprising a generally planar panel that is adapted to be mounted substantially vertically behind a vehicle wheel for receiving on a first side water released by the wheel as it rotates, the panel being formed from a plurality of vertical baffles, the plurality of vertical baffles being extruded and having a plurality of spacers provided between the baffles, the spacers being supported by elongate horizontal shafts, the plurality of vertical baffles being positioned in a side by side relationship to define at least one passage therebetween, the at least one passage leading from the first side to a rear second side of the panel, the at least one passage being other than normal to the plane of the panel, and at least one water-collecting pocket along a side of the at least one passage, wherein, in use, air and water entering the at least one passage are separated so that air passes through the at least one passage and mixes with ambient air on a second side of the panel, and water collects in the at least one water-collecting pocket.

Claim 14 (new): A method for preventing spray from emerging from a wheel of a vehicle, the method comprising:

providing a generally planar panel for receiving on a first side water released by the wheel as it rotates, the panel including at least one passage which leads from the first side to a rear second side of the panel, the at least one passage being other than normal to the plane of the panel, and at least one water-collecting pocket along a side of the at least one passage, wherein, in use, air and water entering the at least one passage are separated so that air passes through the at least one passage and mixes with ambient air on a second side of the panel, and water collects in the at least one water-collecting pocket;

mounting the planar panel substantially vertically behind a vehicle wheel.